



# Governor Cuomo Announces Innovative Clean Energy Project on Long Island Under Reforming the Energy Vision



***First Large-Scale Anaerobic Digester in the New York City Metropolitan Area [SPECIAL REPORT]  
to Process Food Waste into Clean Energy, Advancing Communities toward a More Sustainable Future***

(Long Island, NY) Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced the launch of an anaerobic digester project on Long Island that will serve as an innovative model of how clean, on-site power can significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support sustainable communities. By providing Long Island with a local clean energy generation resource, the project aligns with Governor Cuomo's Reforming the Energy Vision, the State's comprehensive energy strategy to build a clean, resilient and affordable energy system for all New Yorkers.

"This exciting project is yet one more way we're investing in a sustainable energy future and building a cleaner and greener New York," Governor Cuomo said. "This first-of-its kind project for Long Island and the greater New York metropolitan area will build upon this administration's commitment to expand the state's use of renewable energy and reduce our carbon footprint."

The new anaerobic digester will be operated by American Organic Energy at Long Island Compost's 62-acre facility in Yaphank, Suffolk County and will process over twice as much food waste as currently processed at any existing privately-owned food waste digesters accepting offsite food waste in New York State. The project will accept approximately 120,000 tons of food waste, 30,000 tons of fats, oils and greases, and 10,000 tons of grass clippings from the Long Island region annually that would otherwise have been transported and dumped into landfills, contributing to harmful greenhouse gas emissions. The digester will convert these waste streams to clean energy, clean water to be used for plant processes, and solid-based fertilizer.

Anaerobic digestion is a biological process that occurs when organic matter is decomposed by bacteria in the absence of oxygen. During the decomposition process, the biogas released can be recovered, treated and used to generate energy in place of traditional fossil fuels.

Richard Kauffman, Chairman of Energy and Finance for New York said, "Under Reforming the Energy Vision, New York is making it possible for innovators to test and market sophisticated energy solutions uniquely tailored to the needs of our communities – a vital part of building a cleaner, efficient and affordable energy infrastructure. Projects such as this anaerobic digester are positioning New York today to meet its ambitious renewable energy goals of the future."

The project, which is scheduled to be completed in August 2016, is expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 40,000 tons annually, equivalent to removing 8,125 cars from the road.

The project is part of the Cleaner, Greener Communities program, a major statewide initiative encouraging communities to incorporate sustainability goals and principles into local plans and projects. The program enables communities to form partnerships that transform markets and lead to expanded deployment of clean energy, the reduction of emissions and the generation of economic development benefits. The program, administered by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), also empowers communities to take action, providing technical resources and decision-making tools on land use, housing, transportation, energy, economic development and environmental practices, resulting in a more vibrant and prosperous New York.

John B. Rhodes, President and CEO of NYSERDA said, "Communities are at the heart of New York's clean energy goals and play a central role in advancing the state toward a cleaner and more sustainable future. This anaerobic digester project is a significant step forward for the Long Island region in minimizing greenhouse gas emissions and reducing material going into landfills, providing economic and environmental benefits to its residents."

All the electric power needed to run the digester and the existing facility will be generated using biogas from the project. Long Island Compost also plans to convert the biogas to renewable natural gas that will be used to fuel its trucks on-site, reducing diesel consumption by 200,000 gallons annually. An additional 1.9 million gallons of diesel per year will be offset by injecting the remaining renewable gas produced by the digester into the National Grid natural gas pipeline on Long Island. This will enable the gas to be used to fuel compressed natural gas vehicles in other areas.

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Acting Commissioner Marc Gerstman added, "The Department is committed to working with communities and businesses to expand and enhance organics diversion and use in order to conserve existing resources, reduce environmental impacts and promote alternative uses of previously wasted materials. This project demonstrates that excess food and food scraps, that cannot be donated or used for animal feed, are resources that can be used to generate clean energy with the end products being recycled into a valuable soil amendment. This outstanding project will help New York lead the way in these efforts."

Senator Thomas Croci said, "I want to congratulate NYSERDA and Scotts on their partnership to fund innovative clean energy development while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and landfill waste. Several years ago, nearby residents and the facility owners finally began a constructive dialogue to explore ways to establish more sustainable business practices and for LI Compost to be a better neighbor. I'm gratified that Scotts has continued this effort, and that NYSERDA and the REDC recognized this opportunity to promote efficient clean energy and improve the environment."

County Executive Steve Bellone said, "I thank Governor Cuomo for advancing innovative clean energy projects in our region. Initiatives like these promote and support a sustainable future for New York State. I am pleased that Yaphank is the home to such a project and look forward to additional projects like these which reduce the amount of harmful pollutants in our region."

Brookhaven Town Supervisor Ed Romaine said, “The Anaerobic Digester at Long Island Compost will, among other advantages, be a step in the right direction to improve air quality for Yaphank residents that live near the facility. This is another example of how government can work with the private sector to promote sustainability and produce a greater benefit to the environment. I look forward to seeing other companies get on board with the Governor’s initiative.”

American Organic Energy CEO, Charles Vigliotti, said, “We are dedicated to building nothing less than the most sophisticated food waste processing facility in the world. To that end, we’ve partnered with GE for water clean-up and nutrient recovery and ScottsMiracle-Gro for solids and fertilizer marketing and distribution.”

Jim Hagedorn, Chairman & CEO of ScottsMiracle-Gro, said, “We’re proud to be one of the largest recyclers of green waste in the U.S. with more than five billion pounds of waste used each year by our nationwide network of growing media products instead of heading to landfills. The investment by American Organic Energy in anaerobic digester technology ushers in a new way to transform even more local waste material into a reusable nutrient supply and is a tremendous value as we continue our steps to provide an array of organic solutions for consumers.”

Heiner Markhoff, President and CEO, water and process technologies for GE Power & Water, said, “To achieve greater regional and national sustainability, we are seeing a growing trend underway in which municipalities and industries across the country are focusing more of their efforts on energy neutral resource recovery solutions to reduce their environmental impacts and boost local economic development, including producing more of their own on-site cleaner water and energy. GE is pleased to be a part of the American Organic Energy project, as it represents a significant step in transforming how solid wastes will be managed in New York State as a potential renewable energy resource.”

Long Island REDC Co-Chairs Kevin Law, President of the Long Island Association and Stuart Rabinowitz, President of Hofstra University, said, “American Organic Energy’s anaerobic digester will reduce air pollution and landfilling, benefit local agriculture and create jobs. Long Island continues to benefit from Governor Cuomo’s innovative approach to economic development and the environment, as well the region’s highly skilled and educated workforce.”

Cleaner, Greener Communities is funded through the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), the first market-based regulatory program in the United States to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. RGGI is a cooperative effort among the states of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont to cap and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the power sector.

The REDC initiative is a key component of Governor Cuomo’s transformative approach to State investment and economic development. The councils are public-private partnerships composed of local experts and stakeholders from business, academia, local government, and non-governmental organizations. The Regional Councils have redefined the way New York invests in jobs and economic growth by putting in place a community-based, bottom up approach and establishing a competitive process for State resources. After three rounds of the REDC process, over \$2 billion has been awarded to more than 2,200 job creation and community development projects consistent with each region’s

strategic plans, supporting the creation or retention of more than 130,000 jobs. For more information on the Regional Councils, please visit [regionalcouncils.ny.gov](http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov).

### ***About Reforming the Energy Vision***

Under Governor Cuomo's *Reforming the Energy Vision* (REV), New York State is spurring clean energy innovation and attracting new investment to build a cleaner, more resilient and affordable energy system for all New Yorkers. REV encompasses groundbreaking regulatory reform to integrate clean energy into the core of our power grid, redesigned programs and strategies to unlock private capital, and active leadership in deploying innovative energy solutions across the State's own public facilities and operations. REV will enable a dynamic, clean energy economy operating at a scale that will stimulate opportunities for communities across the state to create jobs and drive local economic growth, while protecting our environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants.

Successful initiatives already launched as part of REV include NY-Sun, NY Green Bank, NY Prize, K-Solar and a commitment to improve energy affordability for low-income communities.

To learn more about Governor Cuomo's initiative for Reforming the Energy Vision, please visit <http://www.ny.gov/REV4NY>.

---